

**Security Council**

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Identical letters dated 23 October 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I should like to convey to you the position of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding the twenty-sixth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) (S/2017/867).

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic is surprised to see its name dragged in to the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004), given that the Syrian Arab Republic has implemented all obligations of the resolution incumbent upon it. In particular, Syria objects to the references in paragraphs 2 and 6, as those matters do not fall within the mandate and parameters of resolution 1559 (2004). Syria expresses its regret that the authors of the report have fallen into line with the anti-Syrian political campaign aimed at interfering in Syria's internal affairs and undermining its bilateral relations with the Lebanese Republic.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic also objects to the references to Syrian refugees in paragraph 7 of the report. Syria stresses its desire and readiness to enable Syrian citizens who have been forced to leave their homes because of terrorism perpetrated by armed terrorist groups to return to their homes safely without having their suffering exploited for political purposes. It also stresses the need to observe international humanitarian law and human rights instruments with respect to the Syrian refugees.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic emphasizes that border demarcation is a sovereign matter subject to the wills of the Governments of the two States involved. In that connection, we remind you that it is continued Israeli occupation of Arab territories that is preventing any progress on that issue, and that the real obstacle standing in the way of final demarcation of the Syrian-Lebanese border is the continued Israeli occupation of the Shab'a Farms.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reiterates its position regarding the statements contained in paragraph 12 concerning the Shab'a Farms. What is obstructing a resolution of that issue is the persistent and stubborn refusal by the Israeli occupying forces to implement internationally recognized resolutions and withdraw from the occupied lands. Resolute international will is required to compel the Israeli occupying forces to honour and implement the relevant international resolutions.



The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic also rejects all allegations designed to undermine the brotherly ties that unite Syria and Lebanon and to diminish the enormous sacrifices made by Syria on behalf of the recovery of Lebanon, the safety of its people, and its territorial integrity. Syria stresses that the operations being carried out by the Syrian Arab Army on the Syrian-Lebanese border are legitimate activities aimed at combating terrorism, preventing arms smuggling and blocking terrorist infiltration and attacks launched from certain parts of Lebanese territory. Anyone who stands in the way of the support provided by Syria to our Lebanese brothers in their war against terrorism is supporting the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Nusrah Front terrorist organizations. That is to say, they are supporting those who would undermine the stability of Lebanon.

We draw attention to the fact that those who would criticize the role played by Hizbullah in the struggle against terrorism on both Lebanese and Syrian territory do not want what is best for Lebanon, but instead want Lebanon to remain a hotbed of armed terrorist groups listed by the Security Council. Hizbullah is merely doing its part to combat terrorism in Lebanon and Syria in implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions.

The fact that the authors of the report are content to refer to letters sent by Lebanon protesting Israeli violations against Syria Lebanese airspace without taking a clear stand against those violations demonstrates a total bias towards Israel, which has been violating the provisions of resolution 1559 (2004) in a systematic fashion.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that it is dedicated to the stability, sovereignty, territorial integrity and regional safety of Lebanon, and that it rejects the continued practice of dragging internal events going on in Syria into the above-mentioned report of the Secretary-General.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Bashar Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative